

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PANEL ON WELFARE SERVICES**

**Proposed Residential Training Complex for Juveniles in Tuen Mun**

**PURPOSE**

This paper seeks Members' support for a plan to re-locate and co-locate six existing correctional / residential homes of the Social Welfare Department (SWD) to a new residential training complex for juveniles in Tuen Mun. The purpose is to improve the service quality and provide a more cost-effective and integrated rehabilitative training service for mal-adjusted juveniles and young offenders.

**BACKGROUND**

2. SWD is tasked to provide community and residential treatment services for mal-adjusted juveniles and young offenders through social work service intervention to give effect to the directions of the courts. These services, which include probation supervision, Community Service Orders Scheme, remand home/place of refuge service, residential training and aftercare services, emphasise the social rehabilitation of mal-adjusted juveniles and young offenders. The overall objective is to assist them to start afresh so that they can become law-abiding members of society.

3. At present, SWD is operating six correctional / residential homes for mal-adjusted juveniles and young offenders, namely -

- Fanling Girls' Home (FGH)
- Ma Tau Wai Girls' Home (MTWGH)
- Begonia Road Juvenile Home (BRJH)
- O Pui Shan Boys' Home (OPSBH)
- Pui Chi Boys' Home (PCBH)
- Sha Tin Boys' Home (STBH)

The MTWGH is serving both as a place of refuge / detention and a remand home. A

summary of the legal provision and functions of the above-mentioned homes is at **Appendix I.**

4. Over the past years, given a general preference not to institutionalise juveniles and for the adoption of alternative treatment such as the Police Superintendent Discretionary Scheme and probation supervision, there has been a gradual decline in the utilisation of these homes. In addition, enrolment into these homes fluctuates as it is dependent on the offences committed by young persons, police action and Court decisions on individual case merits and needs.

## **PROBLEMS**

### Inadequate Facilities

5. Our existing homes commenced operation at different times in the past 40 years. The physical environment of the homes varies considerably with a few operating in purpose-built premises while others are accommodated in old non-purpose-built premises with less than satisfactory facilities. The non-purpose-built homes in particular have posed great constraints to the operation of the services to meet changing needs. For instance, in the case of PCBH, the lack of sufficient space and facilities has all along prohibited the proper segregation of local boys and illegal immigrants which is operationally justified in order to minimise conflicts and aggressive behaviour of the two groups of residents. Facilities available in the purpose-built premises are also not entirely satisfactory in catering for residents' needs nowadays.

6. The conditions of the premises and the facilities available are often the concern of visiting Justices of the Peace (JPs). Whilst JPs visiting our homes often gave favourable comments on service delivery including staff dedication, cheerfulness of residents and rich training programmes, etc, they expressed concern on the shabby and outdated facilities in some of the Homes and had made various suggestions for improvement. These included installation of air conditioners in dormitories and multi-purpose halls, repairs in the dormitories, replacing the iron bars by aluminium frames of the windows and doors, replacing the cooking utensils in kitchen, etc. Though we have tried to carry out the necessary remedial and improvement works, the old non-purpose-built buildings and their physical constraints have made it either difficult or not cost-effective to implement a total upgrading.

### High Operating Cost

7. The six homes together now provide a total capacity of only 380 places. As capacity is gradually reduced (from 552 in 1998-99 to the current number) in light of low utilisation, these homes have become increasingly expensive to operate. According to the 2003-04 Controlling Officer's Report, it is estimated that the unit cost for one probation home placement stands at \$43,654/head/month while that of remand home/place of refuge stands as high as \$65,680/head/month. In a value for

money study on services for offenders conducted in 1999, the Audit Commission recommended that SWD should take measures to tackle the problem of high operating cost of the homes. In recent years, SWD has taken proactive measures to tackle the issue of cost by reducing the capacity of the homes, adjusting staff provision, merging homes with similar types of residents and re-provisioning the premises of the homes. However, these homes have all to operate on 24-hour basis throughout the year. Without major rationalisation, there is a limit to how far costs or staffing levels could be reduced without causing detriment to the safety and quality of the service. Such high operating costs have also attracted concern of Members of Legislative Council (LegCo) and the Public Accounts Committee (PAC).

#### Inflexible Manpower Deployment

8. Residents in the homes are of school age and education services form an important part of the training programme. Education provision currently varies reflecting the duration of stay in the respective homes; from a manpower resources point of view, it is simply impractical to station full-time teachers in each of the homes catering for a wide-ranging curriculum. It is considered that the problem cannot be easily resolved until pooling of the manpower resources through co-location of the various homes, so that the teaching staff can be better utilised for various academic subjects and hence better meet the needs of young offenders.

#### Under-utilisation of Sites

9. Three of the existing homes are occupying rather prime sites in the urban areas. These include the PCBH in Quarry Bay, the MTWGH in Ho Man Tin and the BRJH in Kowloon Tong. All these GIC sites have not made full use of their respective plot ratios and in fact, both MTWGH and BRJH are in the heart of residential areas. In its report in 1999, the Audit Commission has recommended relocation of these homes to release the sites for alternative use. This is endorsed by the PAC which has since been monitoring the Government's efforts in identifying alternative sites for re-provisioning.

### **THE SOLUTION: CO-LOCATION OF HOMES**

10. To solve the above problems once and for all, we propose to re-locate and co-locate the six homes with a view to providing a safe and secure institutional environment conducive to the safety and well being of the young offenders under statutory care and supervision ordered by the Courts.

#### Technical Details of the Project

11. Co-location is expected to bring significant benefits to service quality and cost. A brief on the project is at **Appendix II**. Salient points of the project are given in the paragraphs below.

### *Location of Project*

12. The proposed Complex will be located at the site of SWD's former Castle Peak Boys' Home at 17 Yeung Tsing Road, Tuen Mun (please see location map at **Appendix III**). The earmarked site is large enough to accommodate the various proposed facilities. There is adequate space to provide segregated facilities and programmes for offenders and non-offenders of both sexes, backed up by common support facilities. The improved transportation network, such as the opening of West Rail, will improve access to the site for parents and volunteers.

### *Project Consultant and Design of the Complex*

13. The Department has engaged the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) as the project agent. The project will proceed on a Design and Build (D&B) basis. The D & B approach will ensure a tight project programme that will better meet the requirements of this rather unique facility. The design requirements for this Complex include -

- conscious adoption of overseas experience in akin services in the overall design of the home;
- upholding the rights of residents and provision of greater privacy through the adoption of small group living environment;
- adequate functional areas for the various types of residents of both sexes admitted under various ordinances with a view to ensuring full compliance with the needed segregation and other legitimate requirements;
- adequate open space for outdoor activities without mixing the offenders and non-offenders;
- advanced technology such as use of CCTV system to ensure a safe and secure institutional environment;
- adequate provision for educational/vocational/training facilities;
- environmentally friendly design through low-rise building and non-prison-look design; and
- matching with the surrounding environment which is quiet and rich and green in plantation.

### *Environmental Impact*

14. According to technical advice from ArchSD, the project is not designated under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance. It will not have

long-term adverse environmental impacts. During construction, the project contractor will control noise, dust and site run-off nuisances to within established standards and guidelines through the implementation of mitigation measures in the relevant contracts. These include the use of silencers, mufflers, acoustic lining or shields for noisy construction activities, frequent cleaning and watering of the site, and the provision of wheel-washing facilities.

#### *Traffic Impact*

15. As the training complex will not generate large volume of traffic, the project will not have long-term traffic impact to the Tuen Mun area.

#### *Creation of Jobs*

16. Subject to review, we estimate that the proposed works under the project will create about 320 jobs.

#### Significant Advantages arising from Co-location of Homes

17. There will be essential and substantial gains and advantages upon materialisation of the co-location project as highlighted below.

#### *Enhancement in Service Quality*

18. Apart from significant improvement in the physical setting and hardware, the new home will facilitate enhancement to the quality of service for young offenders and mal-adjusted juveniles through the adoption of a new and integrated service management approach. Also, co-location will enable the Department to make the most conscious and flexible use of staffing resources with a view to enhancing the supervision and care of residents. Some anticipated significant advantages are as follows –

- greater flexibility in deploying staff to meet changing demand for services in the various homes;
- eliminating grey areas of work among different ranks of staff. For example, the existing homes involve both Social Work Assistants (SWA) and Senior Welfare Workers (SWW) in discharging the caring duties of the residents. Such arrangement is historical and gives rise to staff conflicts and managerial problem.
- close collaboration and interfacing with other departmental units, such as the Departmental Psychological Unit and other community-based support services. A package of programmes ranging from intensive individual counselling to therapeutic groups, developmental programmes and community services will be designed and implemented to meet the needs of residents. For example, we may arrange residents

to participate in community activities and to perform community services from time to time. Through this mutual helping process of give and take, closer community cohesion and integration can be reinforced; and

- with the benefit of upgraded facilities, we may embark on an integrated and evidence-based approach to address the criminogenic needs of the mal-adjusted juveniles and young offenders.

### *Improved cost-effectiveness*

19. With greater flexibility in the re-deployment of staff and resources, co-location will reduce considerably the operating cost of the residential services. Instead of separate sets of staffing to carry out the daily care and supervision duties in six different homes in different locations, the new complex will be operated by one set of staff with shared facilities such as kitchen, medical and school services under the command of one Superintendent. This is expected to generate a savings of about \$20 million per year, representing about 20% efficiency gain compared to the current resources deployed. Further savings are also expected from contracting out support services. There will also be substantial gains from redevelopment and / or sale of the three urban sites presently occupied by the six homes.

20. As for alternative use of the sites and premises of the three homes in the New Territories, namely FGH, STBH and OBSBH, preliminary discussions show that the relatively new STBH would be suitable for residential services for people with disabilities while the other two may be considered for use as youth facilities.

### **STAFFING IMPLICATIONS**

21. Implementation of the co-location project to achieve the service improvements and cost savings will require streamlining and changes to the existing staffing structure and staffing numbers. It is estimated that the project will give rise to 83 surplus staff mainly in the following grades –

(a) *Social Work Assistant (SWA)*

SWA grade staff will no longer be deployed to look after the daily living routines of the juvenile and young offenders in the co-location home. Instead, a smaller number of SWA grade staff will help render social work programmes, including individual / group counselling service, therapeutic and supportive groups etc. for the residents under the supervision of a Social Work Officer.

(b) *Welfare Worker (WW)*

WW grade staff will be replaced by a dedicated and service-specific

type of residential caring workers recruited to work in the new home to discharge the care and supervision duties of the residents. This will overcome present posting problems and ensure continuity in staffing support.

(c) *Teaching staff and Workshop Instructors*

Instead of posting full time teacher and instructor staff, consideration will be given to outsource education and vocational training services to ensure that changing needs of residents are met at all times.

(d) *Supporting Staff*

Lesser number of supporting staff including staff at the grade of Assistant Clerical Officer, Registered and Enrolled Nurses, Workman II, Cook, Property Attendant, Driver, Ward Attendant will be required and consideration will be given to outsourcing the cleansing, security and catering services.

All the above grades have been included as designated grades in the second Voluntary Retirement Scheme. The Department will have to re-assess the situation, in particular the arrangement for SWA and WW grade staff, in light of the outcome of the second Voluntary Retirement Scheme and natural wastage in the coming few years. In any case, the Department has an overall strategy to deal with surplus staff arising from this project and other service initiatives.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

22. The estimated capital cost of the complex has been updated and a breakdown of the revised estimate of \$354.4 million is as follows –

	Million (\$)
Site Work	3.9
Geotechnical Works	10.0
Piling	55.0
Building	116.3
Building Services	58.3
Drainage and External Works	46.2
Furniture and Equipment	33.5
Consultant's fees for Quantity Surveying Services	2.1
Contingencies	<u>29.1</u>
Total	<u>354.4</u>

## **CONSULTATIONS**

23. The project was presented and discussed in the Social Services Committee of the Tuen Mun District Council on 11 March 2003 and the Social Welfare Advisory Committee on 4 April 2003. Members supported the project.

## **WAY FORWARD**

24. Subject to LegCo Welfare Panel's endorsement, we will consult the Public Works Subcommittee on 11 June 2003. Subject to approval of funds by Finance Committee of the LegCo, the works can commence on site around early 2004 and be completed by end 2006 at the earliest.

## **ADVICE SOUGHT**

25. Members are requested to give their support for the project as set out in this paper.

Social Welfare Department  
April 2003



**Correctional / Residential Homes under Social Welfare Department**

Name of Home	Capacity	Ordinance / Types of Residents
<i>Places of Refuge / Place of Detention</i>		
Pui Chi Boys' Home	40	<p><b>i) Protection of Children and Juvenile Ordinance (Capt 213)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- boys aged 8 to 18 in need of care or protection</li> <li>- physically disabled but ambulant boys aged 8 to under 18 in need of care or protection</li> <li>- boys, including physically disabled but ambulant, aged 8 to under 18 pending court proceedings and disposals</li> </ul> <p><b>ii) Immigration Ordinance (Cap. 115)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- male illegal immigrants aged 8 to under 18 pending investigation of immigration officers or repatriation</li> <li>- physically disabled but ambulant male illegal immigrants aged 8 to under 18 pending investigation of immigration officers or repatriation</li> </ul>
Ma Tau Wai Girls' Home	80	<p><b>i) Protection of Children and Juvenile Ordinance (Capt 213)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- girls aged 8 to under 18 in need of care or protection</li> <li>- girls aged 8 to 18 pending court proceedings and disposals</li> </ul> <p><b>ii) Immigration Ordinance (Cap. 115)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- female illegal immigrants aged 8 to under 18 pending investigation of immigration officers or repatriation</li> <li>- disabled male and female illegal immigrants aged 8 to under 18 pending investigation of immigration officers or repatriation</li> </ul>

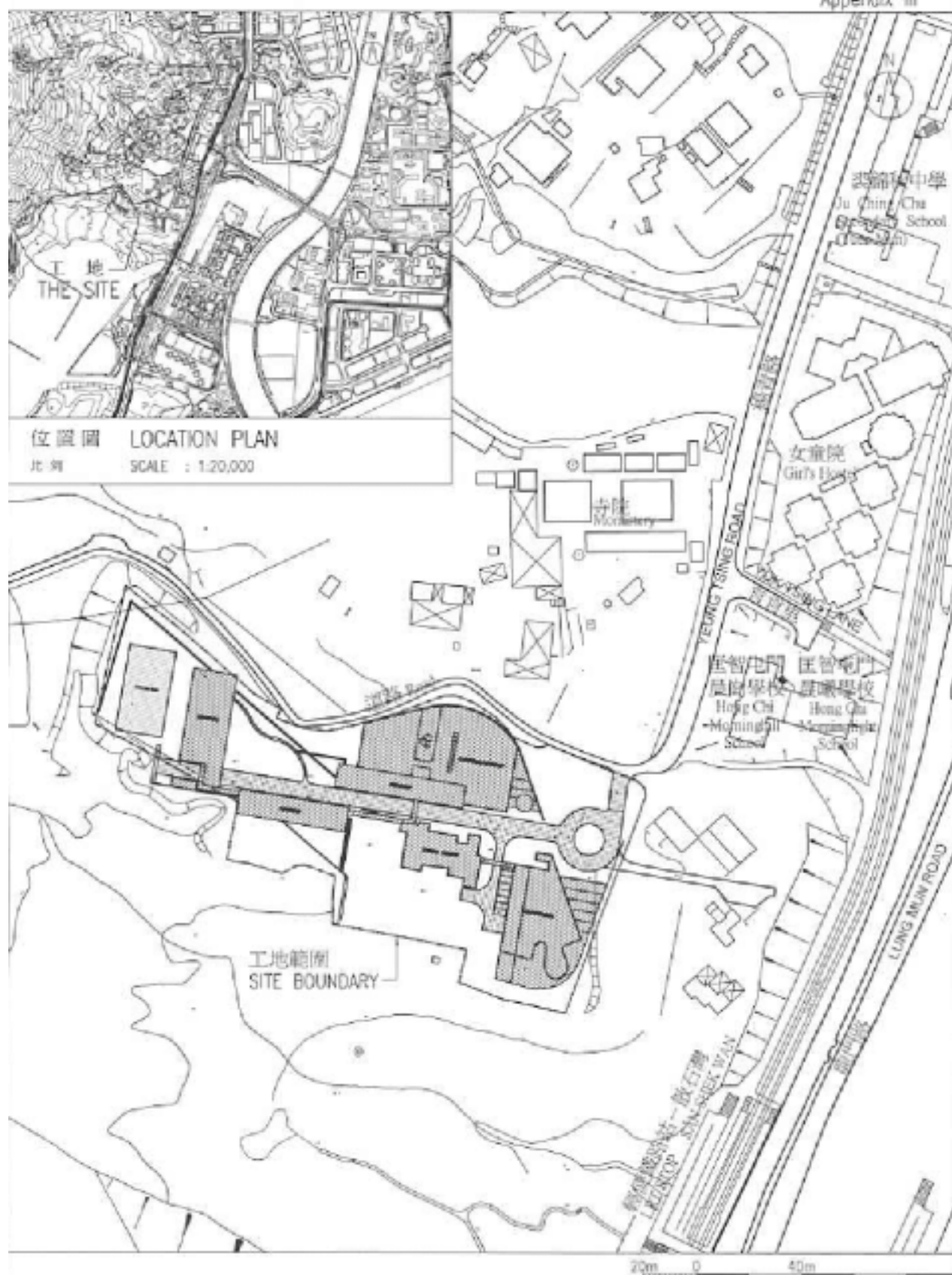
Name of Home	Capacity	Ordinance / Types of Residents
<i>Remand Home</i>		
Begonia Road Juvenile Home	50	<b>Juvenile Offenders Ordinance (Cap 226)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- boys aged 7 to under 16 not released on bail after arrest</li> <li>- boys aged 7 to under 16 detained for police investigation or pending court disposal</li> <li>- boys aged 7 to under 16 put under the detention order</li> </ul>
Ma Tau Wai Girls' Home	20	<b>Juvenile Offenders Ordinance (Cap 226)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- girls aged 7 to under 16 not released on bail after arrest</li> <li>- girls aged 7 to under 16 detained for police investigation or pending court disposal</li> <li>- girls aged 7 to under 16 put under the detention order</li> </ul>
<i>Approved Institution (Probation Home)</i>		
Sha Tin Boys' Home	100	<b>Probation Of Offenders Ordinance (Cap 298)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- male probationers aged 7 to under 16</li> </ul>
Fanling Girls' Home	30	<b>Probation Of Offenders Ordinance (Cap 298)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- female probationers aged 7 to under 16</li> </ul>
<i>Reformatory School</i>		
O Pui Shan Boys' Home	60	<b>Reformatory Schools Ordinance (Cap 225)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- boys aged 7 to under 16 put under the school order</li> </ul>


**Brief on the Proposed Residential Training Complex  
for Juveniles in Tuen Mun**

Site Location: 17 Yeung Tsing Road, Tuen Mun  
(site of the former Castle Peak Boys' Home of SWD)

Site area :	18,400 m <sup>2</sup>
Planned Capacity :	388* (248 for boys and 140 for girls)
Functions :	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Remand Home</li> <li>➤ Place of Refuge</li> <li>➤ Place of Detention for Illegal Immigrants</li> <li>➤ Probation Home</li> <li>➤ Reformatory School</li> </ul>
Types of Residents :	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Male offenders in need of long-term residential training (residents of probation home and reformatory school, 156 places)</li> <li>(ii) Female offenders in need of long-term residential training (residents of probation home, 32 places)</li> <li>(iii) Male offenders under short term remand (48 places)</li> <li>(iv) Female offenders under short term remand (16 places)</li> <li>(v) Boys under Care or Protection order and illegal immigrants in need of short-term detention (44 places)</li> <li>(vi) Girls under Care or Protection order and illegal immigrants in need of short-term detention (92 places)</li> </ul>
Estimated Capital Cost :	\$354.4 million

\* The planned capacity is calculated based on the average highest daily attendance in the six homes in the past 5 years. Given the flexibility and advantage of co-location, the actual capacity to be commissioned will be adjusted to reflect changing needs.



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